



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Lava Beds
National Monument

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Lava Beds National Monument News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Child Rushed to Hospital After Fall in Park Cave

TULELAKE, California— A five year old Klamath Falls child fell approximately 20 feet while exploring a lava tube cave at Lava Beds National Monument with his family on Friday, March 27. Park rangers were the first on the scene. Emergency crews were contacted and the child was flown via helicopter to Sky Lakes Medical Center in Klamath Falls and transferred to Doernbecher Children's Hospital in Portland where he is now recovering.

Lava Beds National Monument is investigating the circumstances of the incident. Of the approximately 135,000 visitors that visit Lava Beds each year, about 25,000 visit Skull Cave. It is a popular cave due to its large entrance and ice floor. There are no records of a similar incident occurring in Skull Cave.

While details of this incident remain unclear, this is an unfortunate reminder to visitors of the potential hazards of caving. Exploring the lava tube caves is enjoyed at your own risk and safety precautions should be taken. Helmets, gloves, knee pads, and long sleeves and pants are recommended. Always take at least one light and extra batteries per person and let someone on the surface know of your plans. Caves floors are not smooth or even and there are low ceilings, tight spots, and level changes that may require difficult maneuvers.

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Lava Beds National Monument, established in 1925, is a land of turmoil, both geologic and historic. Over the last half-million years, volcanic eruptions have created a rugged landscape dotted with diverse volcanic features. Lava tube caves, Native American sites, historic battlefields and a high desert wilderness experience await you!

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The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

For more information about visiting Lava Beds National Monument, call 530-667-8113, email labe_interpretation@nps.gov, or go to www.nps.gov/labe. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter.

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